

to mothers with scarred daughters

when you see your young daughter
doing womanly things,
do not insult her.
do not let shame

settle in her bones.
she will only seek out others
to stop the rattling—
if only for a moment.

maybe she gives herself
so freely to keep others
from taking from her body again.
maybe she thinks it could
salvage her self-worth—
if only for a moment.

show her some softness.
teach her how to salve
unhealed wounds
by unzipping your silence
and revealing your own—
if only for a moment.